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## People Profile: Jessame E. Ferguson

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## Jessame E. Ferguson

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**BORN & LIVED:** Fitchburg, MA; Amherst, MA (twice); Baton Rouge, LA; Maryland (twice).

**EARLY LIFE:** Eh, what? I'm not done yet.

**FAMILY:** Soon-ish, starter project on fiancé: Charlie and cat: Ki-Ki.

**EDUCATION:** B.A. in English UMass-Amherst; M.L.I.S. LSU.

**FIRST JOB:** Approx. age: 10 Job: Cat sitting business (also did "baby" sitting, but preferred cats - they're a lot easier and more predictable)

**PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES:** Access Librarian, Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, MD. Librarian for Digital Initiatives & Research and Instructional Services Planning, UMass-Amherst.

**IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO:** Pretend I'm the active and outdoorsy type (biking, hiking, walking, exploring). But really I watch a lot of PBS and more of my radio's buttons are being replaced by NPR stations.

**FAVORITE BOOKS:** I used to read (non-work related) books... Now I'm lucky if I have time to get through an issue of *Utne*.

**PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD:** George Bush (sorry, that's the first serious thing that came to mind)

**PHILOSOPHY:** Work as hard and as well as you can, so that you can enjoy your free time to relax and ponder other interests.

**MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT:** Everything, I'm really impressed I've done it and it's working out so well!

**GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW:** Associate Director (or financial independence, which isn't likely since I don't play the lottery)

**HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS:** Hopefully recovering from all the financial difficulty of the early part of the century, and rebuilding staffing and budgets to focus on the necessity to educate and inform. 

## Consortial Circulation via Patron Placed Holds in the USMAI's Shared Catalog and its Impact on Collection Development and ILL

by **Jessame Ferguson** (Head of Circulation and Media, University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery, Baltimore, Maryland) <jessame@umbc.edu>

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The **University System of Maryland and Affiliated Institutions (USMAI)** is made up of the fourteen campuses of the **University of Maryland**, as well as two independent state institutions, **St. Mary's College** and **Morgan State University**, and shares one online Aleph catalog, **catalogusmai**. Among the USMAI schools are two law libraries, a medical library and the flagship **University of Maryland Library at College Park**. **catalogusmai** was brought up live in January 2003.

The previous **CARL** catalog had been shared by **Morgan State University** and all the **USM (University System of Maryland)** institutions with the exception of the **Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HSHSL)** at the **University of Maryland at Baltimore**. **Patron Placed Holds (PPH)** were easily done between campuses, with the exception of requests for or from the **HSHSL**, which all went through **ILL**.

Patrons are now able to search the combined **catalogusmai** and request books online from any institution in the consortium. One of the unique features of the **USMAI** holds process in **Aleph** is that patrons are able to place title level holds in the **OPAC** rather than item specific holds. When a patron finds a title that they need, they are able to place a request without having to determine which individual copy is available to

fill their request. The system evaluates the hold group and places their hold on the best available copy, or recalls an item if no available copy can be found. Each library receives an "outstanding holds" (pull) list daily of materials requested for pick-up at other libraries. The books are located, discharged and marked by the system as "in transit" to the location where it was requested for pickup. Materials are mailed or transported to the appropriate institution, on various schedules. Depending upon mailing method used, some campuses may have to wait a week to receive their materials, while most campuses receive their materials within a few days.

### Impact on Interlibrary Loan

While **USMAI** patrons may place holds on books through **catalogusmai**, articles are still requested through Interlibrary Loan. The advantage of this arrangement is that the **ILL** staff at **UMBC** (the **University of Maryland Baltimore County**) can spend time on these article requests and requests from other institutions, rather than dealing with the 13,000 hold requests filled by **UMBC** for other **USMAI** campuses, and the 7,000 **USMAI** requests filled for **UMBC** patrons. While these requests would certainly boost **ILL**'s statistics, the **ILL** staff would be overwhelmed by more than double the number of filled requests processed for both lending and borrowing. These statistics, of course, don't take into account the amount of time processing the titles that weren't sent but were searched in the stacks.

In addition to sharing an online catalog, the **USMAI** has many consortially purchased online databases, which serve the research needs of many **USMAI** patrons. Other more specialized databases are not necessary to some of the **USMAI** campuses, and so are consortially purchased only by campuses with those programs to support.

At **UMBC**, even with the many shared fulltext databases and over 4,000 total paper and e-journal subscriptions, we find that our

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### Buyer Beware: from page 32

The results of this survey have confirmed my suspicions that, at least some of the time, patrons are bypassing our library for interlibrary loan. Their reasons for doing so are unclear, although they may believe it is timesaving to search more libraries at once. It seems that in an effort to make our users more self-sufficient we have lost a valuable communication opportunity. That is, we no longer perform an interlibrary loan interview as recommended by **Lois Gilmer** who states that patrons "may have very specific ideas on the subjects for which they need additional material. To ob-

tain as much information as possible to help in filling the request, the **ILL** librarian must exercise the same kinds of interview skills as the reference librarian does in the traditional reference interview." (Gilmer 122) We need to communicate to our patrons the need to thoroughly search our collection before incurring the time and costs associated with interlibrary loan. I plan to add this point to my library instruction sessions. I also believe we need to develop a strategy for receiving feedback from patrons on which subjects lack coverage in our collection. 